

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING, FRENCH PARK, TUESDAY, 10/13/20, 5:00 PM

VOTE!!

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADU's)

Purposes and Intent of the Egremont Planning Board's Proposed ADU Bylaw:

- Provide homeowners with more expansive property right options while also providing protection for neighbors.
- Provide alternative housing options to meet the growing needs of our community:
 - Provide homeowners with a place to care for family members who may not be able to care for themselves and/or a place for an on-site caregiver. This provides a great source of comfort for families and allows for aging in place while maintaining independence and privacy. ADU's also allow for multi-generations of families to be able to live close by and offer support for childcare, healthcare and financial assistance while maintaining independence and privacy for all.
 - ADU's will provide moderately priced and workforce housing options for young families, couples, a single person, and those who work in the community who cannot afford to buy a home. Egremont lacks housing for those we rely on for services; Childcare, healthcare workers, teachers, firefighters, police officers, landscapers, people in the arts.
 - Provide homeowners with a stable source of additional rental income to enable them to to off-set mortgage payments or meet other financial obligations to remain in their home. For example, an ADU can support working families with high daycare costs by providing a dwelling for live-in-help or offset costs by a rental income stream.
 - Provide a family owned business the opportunity for an owner, or family member to live on the same site as the family business.

Here are some frequently asked questions about ADUs:

Q1: What is an ADU? ADU's are thought of as small homes, around 700-900 square feet. Large enough to accommodate 1 or 2, maybe 3 bedrooms, one bathroom and facilities for cooking. It's small in scope and intent.

Q2: What is different about an ADU from a 2 family home and a multi-family home?: The proposed ADU Bylaw allows detached ADUs to be constructed on a stand alone basis either within an existing structure, i.e., garage or barn, or a to-be-built structure. Two family and multifamily dwellings exist under one roof. The ADU is contained under a separate roof.

Q3: How does the proposed bylaw protect neighbors? Size; setbacks, acreage requirements and property oversight. Square footage is limited to 800 square feet for an ADU created by right, and from 800 to 1200 square feet if created by special permit, whether it is in an existing structure or is new construction. Many ADUs will be built within an existing structure and won't change its footprint. In addition, an ADU must comply with all local health and building codes, and other regulations including septic system requirements that might necessitate

upgrading. For new construction, the ADU must comply with increased side and rear yard setbacks to protect abutters.

Q4: What are the benefits of ADUs in Egremont? There is a critical shortage of affordable rental housing. Here in Egremont, ADUs will provide flexibility to property owners who want to establish housing for a caregiver, elderly parents, or family members. ADU's can also create a source of income for those whose homeownership expenses have outpaced their financial resources. In addition, ADU's provide workforce housing so that those who work in our community can live in our community; firefighters, police officers, healthcare workers, artisans and teachers. This approach helps to create a more balanced community.

Q5: Will allowing ADUs cause an explosion of commercial rental properties through third parties such as AirBnB and VRBO? That has not happened in other towns in Massachusetts that have allowed ADUs. In fact, other towns are currently looking to ease restrictions on ADU's to increase their viability. Currently, Egremont has 40 registered short term rental units. The PB Bylaw includes a rental provision to protect against a glut of corporate rental properties flooding a neighborhood. In addition, effective July 1, 2019, Massachusetts established a 5.7% tax on short term rentals, (31 days or less). At the Egremont Special Town meeting on 10/13/2020, currently on the Warrant is an article, which if passed, would add an additional 6% tax on short term rental created for local revenue. Short term rental properties must be registered with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue or face stiff financial penalties. Towns have access to this information so that short term rentals may be monitored.

Q6: Couldn't a homeowner convert a one-family dwelling into a two-family dwelling without creating an ADU? Yes, because Egremont's zoning bylaw already allows that conversion.

Q7: Can there be more than one ADU on a lot? No, only 1 ADU is allowed.

Q8: How come I can't put an ADU on a lot with a multi-family dwelling? Multi-family dwellings currently allow up to six attached units. Adding an ADU would create a less than desirable housing density and less protection for neighbors. Most importantly, the primary purpose of ADU's is to help occupant owners, not landlords.

Q9. What happens if a proposed ADU is larger than 800 square feet? ADUs larger than 1200 square feet are not allowed. A special permit from the Planning Board is required for ADUs between 800 and 1200 square feet.

Q10: How do we insure against absentee landlords? Our current proposal provides that no more than one housing unit can be rented at a time. For a lot with one dwelling unit and an ADU, one unit may be rented. For a lot with two dwelling units and an ADU, no more than two units may be rented. at a time.

Q11: Do ADU's allow for a home based business? Yes, home based businesses are allowed.